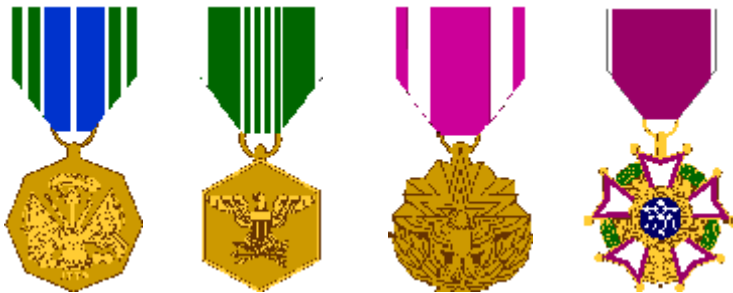


Military

Award Writing

Made Simple



Army
Achievement
Medal
(AAM)

Army
Commendation
Medal
(ARCOM)

Meritorious
Service
Medal
(MSM)

Legion
of
Merit
(LOM)

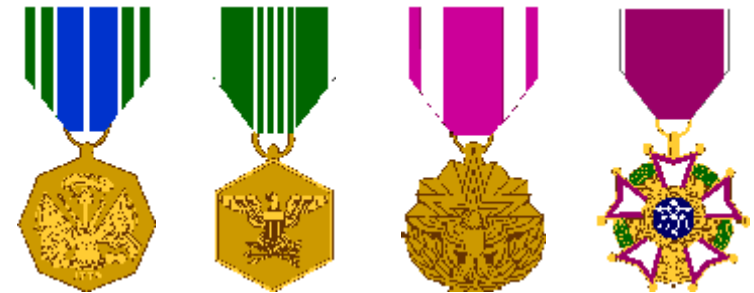
AUGUST 2002

TF 510th Personnel Services Battalion
MNB(E), KFOR-4A
Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo
APO AE 09340

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FOREWORD

Right now, somewhere in your unit, there is an excellent soldier about to be reassigned or released from the service. As you recall the tasks which he/she was required to perform, you also remember that he/she accomplished them in a most proficient and thorough fashion, exhibiting an excellent attitude, unquestioning loyalty and professionalism worthy of comment. Yes, you make note of that with all the best intentions in the world, but yet, the writing of an award recommendation never comes. Why? Laziness? I think not. Instead, it is a combination of procrastinating until it is too late and then the uncertainty of proper format, phraseology and procedure.

This pamphlet was assembled to assist in the preparation of an award recommendation, so that each deserving soldier is recognized for his/her exemplary achievement or service.

From the staff of Task Force 510TH Personnel Services Battalion, we wish you good luck and good writing!

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AWARD CRITERIA

1. Legion of Merit (LOM).

a. Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces who has distinguished him/herself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services.

b. The performance must have been such as to merit recognition of key individuals for services rendered in a clearly exceptional manner. Exceptional performance of duties normal to the grade, branch, specialty or assignment, and experience of an individual is not an adequate basis for this award.

c. In peacetime, service would be in the nature of a special requirement or of an extremely difficult duty performed in an unprecedented and clearly exceptional manner.

2. Meritorious Service Medal (MSM). Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces that has distinguished him/herself by outstandingly meritorious achievement or service.

3. Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM).

a. Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces that distinguished him/herself by heroism, meritorious achievement or meritorious service.

b. May be awarded for acts of valor which are of a lesser degree than required for the Bronze Star. These acts may involve aerial flight.

c. The award may be used for acts of noncombatant related heroism which do not meet the requirements for a Soldier's Medal.

4. Army Achievement Medal (AAM). Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces who has distinguished him/herself by meritorious service or meritorious achievement.

5. Awards upon retirement.

a. Each individual approaching retirement will be considered for an appropriate decoration based on his/her years of service, degree of responsibility, and manner of performance.

b. Retirement awards may include a period of service which is longer than the time served in the recommending command. An extended period should only be considered in those cases where the length or nature of the individual's terminal assignment would not qualify him for an appropriate award. The extended period is limited to the soldier's last ten years of service.

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AWARD RECOMMENDATION IMPROVEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that Parts I (Soldier Data) and II (Recommender Data) of the DA Form 638, Recommendation for Award, is filled out correctly.
2. Endorsements from commanders in the chain-of-command have a positive effect on the approval authority's decision to approve the recommended award.
3. If at all possible, utilize the prescribed Army software (JetForm or FormFlow Filler) to prepare DA Form 638.
4. Prior to writing Part III (Justification and Citation Data):
 - a. Gather all the facts.
 - b. Organize the facts into chronological order.
5. When writing achievements:
 - a. Be specific.
 - b. Use one idea per sentence.
 - c. Aim for short sentences.
 - d. Use direct statements – active verbs.
 - e. Eliminate “introductory” words.
 - f. Get rid of “say nothing” words.
 - g. Never say “successful accomplishment”; say “accomplishment” only.
6. Check for spelling errors. Utilize the spell-check function of JetForm or FormFlow Filler software.
7. Ask someone to read your draft.
8. Check, double-check and re-check!

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HOW TO FILL OUT DA FORM 638, RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD			
For use of this form, see AR 600-8-22, the proponent agency is ODCSPER			
For valor/heroism/vwartime and all awards higher than MSM, refer to special instructions in Chapter 3, AR 600-8-22.			
1. TO Commander (Address of Approval Authority of the Recommended Award)	2. FROM Commander (Address of Soldier's Immediate Commander)	3. DATE (Date)	
PART I - SOLDIER DATA			
4. NAME Enter Soldier's Complete Name (Last, First Middle)	5. RANK (Soldier's Rank)	6. SSN 123-45-6789	
7. ORGANIZATION Soldier's Unit Address	8. PREVIOUS AWARDS List only previous individual awards including oak leaf clusters. (example MSM-IOLC, ARCOM-3OLC, AAM-5OLC)		
9. BRANCH OF SERVICE Required only for members of other U.S. Armed Forces	10. RECOMMENDED AWARD AAM 2OLC	11. PERIOD OF AWARD a. FROM (From Date) b. TO (End Date)	
12. REASON FOR AWARD 12a. INDICATE ACH, SVC, PCS, ETS, OR REI ACH		13. POSTHUMOUS YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PART II - RECOMMENDER DATA			
14. NAME Name of Recommender	15. ADDRESS Recommender's Unit Address		
16. TITLE/POSITION Title/Position of Recommender	17. RANK (Rec Rank)	18. RELATIONSHIP TO AWARDEE e.g. Supervisor	
PART III - JUSTIFICATION AND CITATION DATA (Use specific bullet examples of meritorious acts or service)			
20. ACHIEVEMENTS			
ACHIEVEMENT #1 o Block 20 allows up to 4 separate achievements to be listed for awards of the AAM, ARCOM, and MSM. For recommendations of LOM in USAREUR, a one page narrative double-spaced justification in bullet format is required and will be added as an addendum (enclosure) to the DA Form 638; block 20 of DA Form 638 is left blank. The single page narrative provides space for approximately 25 lines, 15 two-line or a combination of both style bullets, using 12-point Arial or Times New Roman fonts only.			
ACHIEVEMENT #2 o For awards of the AAM, ARCOM, and MSM, you can use bullet statements to list individual's meritorious achievements or service. See collections of helpful word combinations, phrases, adjectives and their synonyms, nouns and their synonyms, and verbs in pages 5 ~ 8 of this pamphlet to help formulate and write achievements.			
ACHIEVEMENT #3 o Justifications/achievements must be specific and factual, giving concrete examples of exactly what the individual did, how it was accomplished, and what benefits or results were realized that significantly exceeded expected performance of duty. For example, name specific plans, programs or actions that enhanced the readiness or effectiveness of the unit or organization, or that have made notable contributions to the morale or esprit de corps.			
ACHIEVEMENT #4 o See samples of opening and helping sentences for achievements in pages 9 ~ 10 of this pamphlet.			
21. PROPOSED CITATION Always start the citation with "For ..." Only the most common abbreviations and acronyms may be used. It is not necessary to indicate the period covered in citations. Citation for awards of the AAM, ARCOM, and MSM are limited to 6 lines, to include retirement awards. For LOM, the citation is limited to nine lines and will be prepared on separate 8-1/2" x 11" bond paper, double-spaced, using 12 point font; block 21 of DA Form 638 is left blank. Citation should have at least one sentence addressing the accomplishments of the awardee. See Award Citation Generator in page 4 of this pamphlet for help in writing accomplishments. Also, pages 11 and 12 of this pamphlet have examples of opening and closing sentences for citations.			

DA FORM 638, NOV 94

REPLACES DA FORM 638-1.
PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF DA FORM 638 ARE OBSOLETE.

USAPPC V6.00

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THE AWARD CITATION GENERATOR

The incomparable Award Citation Generator consists of three columns of buzzwords numbered 0~9 to aid in writing proposed citations:

#	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
0	initiative	resulted in	excellent section management
1	technical skills	were instrumental in	lower unit backlog
2	leadership	generated	significant organizational improvements
3	competence	served to elicit	outstanding customer support
4	experience	were responsible for	boundless customer praise
5	determination	contributed to	successful mission accomplishment
6	enthusiasm	produced	an increase in section efficiency
7	guidance	led to	superior duty performance in others
8	judgment	were the cause of	effective shop operations
9	knowledge	were the stimuli for	high readiness rates of supported units

Procedure is simple. Think of any five digit number at random. Use the first three digits with the first column, the fourth digit on the second column, and the fifth digit on the third column.

Example: Use 3-6-8-1-6. The sentence you write is:

"His competence, enthusiasm, and judgment were instrumental in an increase in section efficiency."

It can be varied by using the last three digits on the last column, in which case the number above would result in this sentence.

"His competence produced effective shop operations, lower unit backlog, and an increase in section efficiency."

Two or three such sentences are enough to fill an awards citation.

The three columns in the Award Citation Generator are set up in a simple subject, verb, predicate format so you can substitute your own words to "custom make" an award or you can pick the words from the columns that you feel fit a particular individual.

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COLLECTION OF HELPFUL WORD COMBINATIONS

- ❑ *ABILITY* (exceptional) (innate) (outstanding) (technical)
(outstanding managerial) (superb planning)
- ❑ *ACTIONS* (conscientious) (aggressive) (tenacious) (decisive)
- ❑ *ACHIEVEMENTS* (significant) (outstanding)
- ❑ *COMPETENCE* (professional) (exceptional)
- ❑ *DEMONSTRATED* (continually) (has clearly) (selflessly)
- ❑ *EFFORTS* (untiring) (vigorous) (energetic) (tireless)
- ❑ *EFFECTIVE* (was outstandingly) (planning) (accomplishment) (highly)
- ❑ *EXPERIENCE* (broad) (professional) (technical)
- ❑ *FORESIGHT* (remarkable) (keen) (accurate)
- ❑ *INITIATIVE* (strong) (rare and exceptional)
- ❑ *JUDGMENT* (sound) (mature) (outstanding) (discerning) (decisive)
- ❑ *KNOWLEDGE* (professional) (technical) (broad) (exceptional)
(superior) (professional and technical)
- ❑ *LEADERSHIP* (brilliant) (dynamic) (inspired) (exceptional) (capable)
(energetic) (outstanding qualities of)
- ❑ *PERFORMANCE* (outstanding) (outstanding record of)
- ❑ *PROFESSIONAL* (confidence) (ability) (skill) (manner)
- ❑ *RESPONSIBILITY* (spirited sense of) (willingness to accept)
(deep sense of)
- ❑ *SERVICE* (dedicated) (outstanding)
- ❑ *UNDERSTANDING* (thorough) (and judgment)

COLLECTION OF HELPFUL PHRASES

- meticulous attention to details . . .
- was a primary contributing factor in . . .
- can be directly attributed to . . .
- streamlined operations procedures . . .
- effectively planned and supervised . . .
- proved himself to be outstanding among his/her . . .

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COLLECTION OF HELPFUL ADJECTIVES AND THEIR SYNONYMS

- ❑ *ABLE* – capable; efficient; competent; skillful; clever; gifted; proficient
- ❑ *ACCOMPLISHED* – cultivated; learned; finished
- ❑ *ACUTE* – sagacious; astute; shrewd; discerning; keen; sharp
- ❑ *BRILLIANT* – distinguished; illustrious; clever; keen
- ❑ *CAPABLE* – proficient; competent; qualified; able
- ❑ *COMMENDABLE* - praiseworthy
- ❑ *COMPETENT* – qualified; able; fit; efficient; capable
- ❑ *DETERMINED* – resolute; resolved; decided; firm
- ❑ *DISTINGUISHED* – celebrated; famous; illustrious; renowned; noted
- ❑ *EFFECTIVE* – adequate; effectual; efficient; capable; operative
- ❑ *EFFICIENT* – effective; operative; capable; competent
- ❑ *EXCEPTIONAL* – extraordinary; uncommon; rare; unusual; superior
- ❑ *ILLUSTRIOUS* – distinguished; eminent; renowned
- ❑ *INEXHAUSTIBLE* – unfailing; unlimited
- ❑ *INVALUABLE* - priceless
- ❑ *MARKED* – conspicuous; prominent; signal
- ❑ *OUTSTANDING* – eminent; prominent; signal
- ❑ *PARAMOUNT* – supreme; chief; dominant
- ❑ *POSSESSING* – endowed; in possession of; master of; possessed of
- ❑ *UNEQUALED* – unmatched; unparalleled; incomparable; inimitable
- ❑ *UNPARALLELED* – peerless; unrivaled; inimitable; unique

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COLLECTION OF HELPFUL NOUNS AND THEIR SYNONYMS

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- ❑ *ACCOMPLISHMENT* – achievement; attainment; realization; performance
- ❑ *ACUMEN* – acuteness; discernment; sagacity
- ❑ *BEARING* – conduct; comportment; manner; demeanor
- ❑ *DETERMINATION* – resoluteness; decision; firmness
- ❑ *DEDICATION* – devotion; steadfastness
- ❑ *DEVOTION* – loyalty; constancy
- ❑ *EFFECTIVENESS* - productiveness
- ❑ *EXCELLENCE* – merit; superiority; greatness; worth
- ❑ *SKILL* – dexterity; adroitness; proficiency; cleverness; faculty; aptitude
- ❑ *TALENT* – ability; cleverness; faculty; gift; aptitude
- ❑ *UNDERSTANDING* – insight; perception; comprehension; discernment
- ❑ *WILLINGNESS* – desire; readiness; eagerness; enthusiasm

COLLECTION OF HELPFUL PHRASES (CON'T)

- performed tasks with untiring energy and without reservation . . .
- was the driving force behind the highly successful . . .
- his leadership style kept his unit at knife's edge of readiness . . .
- instrumental in the unprecedented success of the . . .
- flawlessly coordinated and executed . . .
- creatively developed . . .
- revolutionized the collection and analysis . . .

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- ❑ *SKILL* – dexterity; adroitness; proficiency; cleverness; faculty; aptitude
- ❑ *TALENT* – ability; cleverness; faculty; gift; aptitude
- ❑ *UNDERSTANDING* – insight; perception; comprehension; discernment
- ❑ *WILLINGNESS* – desire; readiness; eagerness; enthusiasm

COLLECTION OF HELPFUL PHRASES (CON'T)

- performed tasks with untiring energy and without reservation . . .
- was the driving force behind the highly successful . . .
- his leadership style kept his unit at knife's edge of readiness . . .
- instrumental in the unprecedented success of the . . .
- flawlessly coordinated and executed . . .
- creatively developed . . .
- revolutionized the collection and analysis . . .

COLLECTION OF HELPFUL VERBS

<i>ABSORB</i>	<i>ACCEPTED</i>	<i>ACQUIRE</i>
<i>ADVANCE</i>	<i>AFFECT</i>	<i>ALLEVIATE</i>
<i>ANALYZE</i>	<i>ASSUMED</i>	<i>BEFIT</i>
<i>BENEFIT</i>	<i>CHALLENGE</i>	<i>CONCEIVED</i>
<i>CONSOLIDATE</i>	<i>CONSTITUTE</i>	<i>DELEGATE</i>
<i>DEMONSTRATE</i>	<i>DISTINGUISH</i>	<i>EDUCATE</i>
<i>EMBELLISH</i>	<i>ENCOURAGE</i>	<i>ENGINEERED</i>
<i>ESTABLISHED</i>	<i>EXEMPLIFY</i>	<i>FACILITATE</i>
<i>FORMULATE</i>	<i>GENERATE</i>	<i>IMPLEMENTED</i>
<i>IMPROVISED</i>	<i>INAUGURATE</i>	<i>INITIATE</i>
<i>INSPIRE</i>	<i>INSTILL</i>	<i>TYPIFY</i>
<i>MANAGE</i>	<i>MOTIVATE</i>	<i>PERSEVERE</i>
<i>PERSIST</i>	<i>PIONEERED</i>	<i>REALIZE</i>
<i>RENOVATE</i>	<i>REORGANIZE</i>	<i>RESTORE</i>
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EXAMPLES OF OPENING SENTENCES FOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The following sample opening sentences for achievements were compiled by TF 510th PSB to aid you in preparing your award recommendation:

- *Served as an Infantry and Armor Company/Team Observer/Controller during 12 High Intensity Conflict (HIC) and Peace Support Operations (PSO) Rotations.*
- *As the Range Safety NCOIC of the largest live fire training area in USAREUR/7A, SFC Jones led the 100th ASG to the successful completion of numerous Conventional Forces Europe treaty inspections and Open Skies treaty overflights during his tenure.*
- *In addition to his primary duties, MSG Johnson provided ground support services and routine maintenance for the assigned C-12 aircraft for 90 days after the contract maintenance crew departed; his dedicated support ensured this aircraft was always mission ready.*
- *Superior performance of duty as Supply Sergeant and Squad Leader from the period January 1999 to June 2000.*
- *During his tenure at CMTC, SFC Smith approached every mission with the attitude of a coach, teacher, trainer and mentor.*
- *As the subject matter expert for TTVIII gunnery, SSG Cruz re-wrote the evaluation/training standards for the 7th ATC TCE course and ensured a smooth transition for all Armor and Cavalry units in Europe from the old TTVII gunnery standards to the advanced TTVIII gunnery standards.*
- *With only 23 days notice, CPT Adams successfully planned, developed and executed a MTT that trained over 400 Kosovo bound 1st ID soldiers in the use of their newly fielded M68 reflex site.*
- *MSG Harris served with distinction for over twenty-three years on active duty with honorable service to the Army and the United States of America.*
- *1SG Williams performed magnificently as the First Sergeant B Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment from 5 May 1999 to 12 December 2000.*

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- *During this period, Captain Jones demonstrated initiative, enthusiasm, professional ability and keen foresight in performing his duties in the logistics field as Exercise FAST PUSH planning officer.*
- *His development and implementation of improved systems and procedures in the field of personnel represents significant achievements.*
- *His exemplary handling of administrative matters attests to his professional knowledge, willingness to accept responsibility, attention to detail, and the ability to adapt himself to any assignment or situation,*
- *During her tenure in this position, Lieutenant Smith demonstrated exceptional ability, accomplishing many complex tasks through diligence, foresight, and sound judgment. Through her capable leadership, she inspired all personnel who served with her to such an extent that all assigned missions were performed in an exemplary manner.*
- *His devotion to duty and superior knowledge of the many facets of the maintenance field, not only resulted in the development of high standards for equipment maintenance, but also inspired all those with whom he worked.*
- *Her professional knowledge, sound judgment and ability to work without supervision evoked many favorable comments from all that were aware of her work. Her devotion to duty contributed significantly to the successful accomplishment of the section's mission.*
- *He willingly assumed these responsibilities, normally performed by a field grade officer, and accomplished the duties with commendable results.*
- *His tact, common sense, professional knowledge, and devotion to duty were an inspiration to his associates and contributed significantly to the high standards of administration, supply, and training that exists in the units he advised.*
- *His exceptionally broad knowledge of administrative and personnel procedures coupled with his initiative, resourcefulness, and willingness to cooperate enabled him to perform many additional duties which added to the smooth operation of the Headquarters.*
- *His honesty, integrity, perseverance, and devotion to duty have contributed immeasurably to his outstanding success as the Battalion Reenlistment NCO.*
- *He significantly contributed to the overall performance of each platoon he trained during over twenty high intensity conflict and peace support operations rotations.*

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- *For your unwavering personal commitment and dedication to duty, honor, and country.*
- *For exceptionally meritorious service while serving as a Small Group Leader and Instructor at the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officers Academy.*
- *For meritorious service while serving in various positions culminating as the Deputy Staff Chaplain, 100th Area Support Group.*
- *For exceptionally meritorious service upon retirement while serving as Supply Supervisor, Supply Sergeant, Platoon Sergeant, Assistant Brigade S4 and Installation Coordinator, 409th Base Support Battalion.*
- *For distinguishing himself by exceptionally meritorious service as the Commander of 282nd Base Support Battalion.*
- *For outstanding performance while assigned as Platoon Sergeant in Delta company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment.*
- *For exceptionally meritorious service in multiple responsibilities throughout twenty-year career.*
- *For outstanding service as Noncommissioned Officer In-Charge of 282nd Base Support Battalion Maintenance Division at the Combat Maneuver Training Center, Hohenfels, Germany.*
- *For exceptional meritorious service for over twenty-three years in the United States Army as a soldier and chaplain assistant.*
- *For extremely meritorious service while serving as the Noncommissioned Officer In-Charge of Logistics, 409th Base Support Battalion, and First Sergeant of Company C, 7th Army Noncommissioned Officers Academy.*

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- *Captain Williams' high professional standards, resourcefulness, devotion to duty, and outstanding ability reflect great credit upon herself and the military service.*
- *Sergeant Jones' careful planning, meticulous attention to detail, and devotion to duty is in keeping with the finest tradition of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself and the United States Army.*
- *Lieutenant Hill's outstanding contribution to the accomplishment of the missions of the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment reflects greatly upon himself and the United States Army.*
- *Specialist Adams' achievements are in the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.*
- *Through her actions and many outstanding accomplishments, Private First Class Cruz has brought only the highest credit upon herself, the 100th Area Support Group, and the United States Army.*
- *Staff Sergeant Johnson's outstanding performance and attained results in this assignment bring great credit to himself and the military service.*
- *The distinct service rendered by Sergeant First Class Harris reflects great credit upon himself, the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officers Academy, 7th Army Training Command and the United States Army.*
- *Your tireless efforts and dedication to duty reflect distinction and great credit upon you, the Combat Maneuver Training Center, 7th Army Training Command and the United States Army.*
- *Your exemplary service and devotion to your country reflect distinct credit upon you, your unit, and the U.S. Army.*
- *Your dedication and proficiency as trainer were significant to the success of the United States Army Europe's mission and reflect great credit upon you, the 7th Army Training Command, and the United States Army.*
- *Your dedication to duty, tactical competence and professionalism serve as an example for others to follow, and bring great credit upon you, the 7th Army Training Command, and the United States Army.*
- *Sergeant First Class Spock's knowledge and dedication during his 21 years of military service have made a lasting contribution to the NCO Corps and reflects distinct credit upon him, his unit and the U.S. Army.*

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REFERENCES

1. AR 600-8-2, Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions (FLAGS)
2. AR 600-8-22, Military Awards
3. AR 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia
4. DoD 1348.33-M, Manual of Military Decorations, Awards, and Honors

WEBSITE CONNECTIONS

1. USAREUR ODCSPIM - Military Awards Issues
<http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/mppd/awards.htm>
2. U.S. Total Army Personnel Command – Military Awards Branch
<https://www.perscom.army.mil/tagd/awards/index.htm>
3. The Adjutant General Directorate - The Institute of Heraldry
<https://www.perscom.army.mil/tagd/tioh/tioh.htm>
4. U.S. Army Publishing Agency Homepage – Electronic Publications and Forms
<http://www.usapa.army.mil/>
5. ArmyAwards.Com – Independent website by SSG Mark L. Sinclair
<http://armyawards.com/>

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5. ArmyAwards.Com – Independent website by SSG Mark L. Sinclair
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